

Keeping things moving

- Several area wrestlers clinch state tournament spots at sectionals.

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🕒 02.05.17

PREP WRESTLING

There are four veteran wrestlers Darlington coach Kelly McDurmon has come to count on, and that did not change Saturday.

The Tigers had four wrestlers finish first in the Class A "A" Sectional, with Dalton Blankenship (113 pounds), Colton Woods (126), Davis Peek (132) and Rhett McDurmon (145) all putting themselves in the state tournament next weekend in Macon.

It gave Darlington more top finishers than anyone other team Saturday, with all four using a blend of focus and experience to come out on top.

"I think that these four guys, what makes them special is how long they've been wrestling," McDurmon said. "They've been doing this long before high school, and today that experience and the work we did in film study really benefitted them."

The results come only a week after Darlington only had three wrestlers win area titles, with Rhett McDurmon finishing second in his class. But Saturday, the sophomore grinded out a 3-0 win over Mt. Zion's Crofford Helton to capture first.

Trion finished Saturday with eight wrestlers qualifying for the state tournament, tied for the most from one team. Cole Luallen (138), Jake Wells (182) and Logan Blevins (195) all took first in their weight class.

Pepperell shined with four wrestlers getting into state at the Class AA "B" Sectional in Rockmart. Seniors Jaxon Croy (145), Jake Ross (170) and Hinton Bollinger (285) all took first in their division.

Dragons coach Joe Knight said the trio's success comes after four years of hard work.

"It is the mindset from these three kids that I am going to miss the most," Knight said. "And I hope it rubs off on all the younger guys, especially in terms of work ethic."

Pepperell sophomore Ethan Sharpe also qualified for state at 126 pounds.

Armuchee put six wrestlers in the top four to qualify for state, with 182-pound wrestler Jacob Henderson earning first in his division. Henderson, a state runner-up last season, has not lost a bout this year.

Indians joining him in Macon next week will be Riley Purdy (106), Wesley Conley (113), Luke Purdy (126), Brayden Butler (132) and Trace Daitz (152).

Chattooga's Griffin Jarrett (106) and Model's Walker Byrd (113) each finished first in their weight class. Chattooga will send a total of five to Macon, while Model and Rockmart each got three wrestlers bound for state.

Rome High had three wrestlers qualify for state at the Class 5A "B" Sectional at Buford, with Ivan Arguello (106) and Elvis Perez (138) finishing third, and Tyler Ingram (145) earning fifth.



Jeremy Stewart/Rome News-Tribune
Trion's Jamey Floyd (top) wrestles Turner County's Johnny Burgess during the 120-pound finals of the Class A "A" Sectional on Saturday Darlington School.



Jeremy Stewart/Rome News-Tribune
Darlington's Colton Woods (top) applies pressure to Truettlen's Tyson Brooks as he nears a pin during the 126-pound finals of the Class A "A" Sectional on Saturday.